

## Message Text

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65-62

ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 L-01 INR-05

INRE-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NEA-07 AF-04 ARA-06

EUR-08 EA-06 PRS-01 /063 W

----- 060891

O R 122356Z FEB 76

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5850

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0558

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, XF, IS

SUBJ: ARAB LEAGUE DEMARCHE ON "ZION SQUARE"

REF: USUN 420, 445, AND 512 (NOTAL)

1. ARAB LEAGUE UN OBSERVER, AMBASSADOR HILMY, CALLED TODAY ON AMBASSADOR BENNETT IN AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN'S ABSENCE TO CONVEY DEPTH OF ARAB ANGER AND RESENTMENT AT NEW YORK CITY ADMINISTRATION PLANS TO DESIGNATE AN AREA FACING UN SECRETARIAT BUILDING AS "ZION SQUARE". HILMY SAID ARAB LEAGUE UN AMBASSADORS MET FEBRUARY 10 TO DISCUSS MATTER. ATMOSPHERE OF MEETING, HE SAID, WAS ONE OF FURY "AT DELIBERATE INSULT AND PROVOCATION" THAT CITY WAS PLANNING AGAINST ARAB GOVERNMENTS. HILMY SAID MANY ARAB DELEGATIONS HAD RECEIVED "CONFRONTATIONAL" INSTRUCTIONS; SYRIA, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS DEMANDING THAT NON-ALIGNED AT UN BE SEIZED OF MATTER.

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2. BENNETT ADVISED STRONGLY AGAINST ARABS PUBLICLY OPPOSING CITY COUNCIL'S PLANS AT THIS STAGE SINCE THIS WOULD HARDEN POSITIONS. HE SAID WE UNDERSTOOD ARAB POINT OF VIEW, RECOGNIZED SERIOUSNESS OF ISSUE, AND WOULD OF COURSE REPORT ARAB LEAGUE APPROACH TO WASHINGTON. BENNETT POINTED OUT THAT CITY COUNCIL'S PLANS HAD CHANGED: PRESENT INTENTION WAS TO DESIGNATE AS "ZION SQUARE" THE ISAIAH WALL AREA OPPOSITE THE UN SECRETARIAT ENTRANCE INSTEAD OF THE BLOCK OF BUILDINGS ON UN PLAZA BETWEEN 45TH AND 46TH STREETS. HILMY SAID HE COULD NOT SEE THAT THIS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE.

3. COMMENT: MANY ARAB DELEGATIONS HAVE RAISED ZION SQUARE ISSUE WITH US, AND WE CAN ATTEST THAT FEELINGS RUN EXTREMELY HIGH. OUR BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT FULL CITY COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER PARKS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WITHIN A WEEK. IF, AS IS LIKELY, COUNCIL APPROVES, PROPOSAL WOULD GO TO MAYOR FOR SIGNATURE.  
BENNETT

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DEMARCHE, MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, NEW YORK, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS, PUBLIC PARKS, ZION SQUARE, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 12 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976USUNN00558  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760054-0732  
**From:** USUN NEW YORK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760253/aaaabuna.tel  
**Line Count:** 79  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION IO  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ARAB LEAGUE DEMARCHE ON "ZION SQUARE"  
**TAGS:** PFOR, XF, IS, UN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006